

About the study



The *Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11* (ECLS-K:2011) is an exciting new study sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education and conducted by Westat.

During the 2010-11 school year, approximately 20,700 kindergartners in 900 public and private schools across the nation will be selected for the ECLS-K:2011. The ECLS-K:2011 will gather information from multiple sources to provide rich data on children's early school experiences beginning with kindergarten and following children through fifth grade. Each year, the study will conduct:

- **Child assessments** – Children will be assessed in reading, mathematics, and science in one-on-one sessions with trained assessors during the regular school day.
- **Physical measurements** – Children will have their height and weight measured. In kindergarten they also will have their hearing tested.
- **Parent interviews** – Parents will be asked to participate in telephone interviews to provide background information about their child, their family, and themselves.
- **Teacher and school administrator interviews** – Children's teachers will be asked to complete questionnaires that ask about their backgrounds, teaching practices, and the classroom learning environment. They also will be asked about children's academic skills. Children's school administrators will be asked to complete questionnaires about their backgrounds and features of their school and programs at the school.
- **Before- and after- school care provider interviews** – In the kindergarten year, before- and after-school care providers will be interviewed about both their care settings and their care of the ECLS-K:2011 children.



For additional questions
or comments, contact:

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To learn more about the ECLS program,
visit <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls> and
to learn more about the ECLS-K:2011
visit <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls/myeclsk2011>



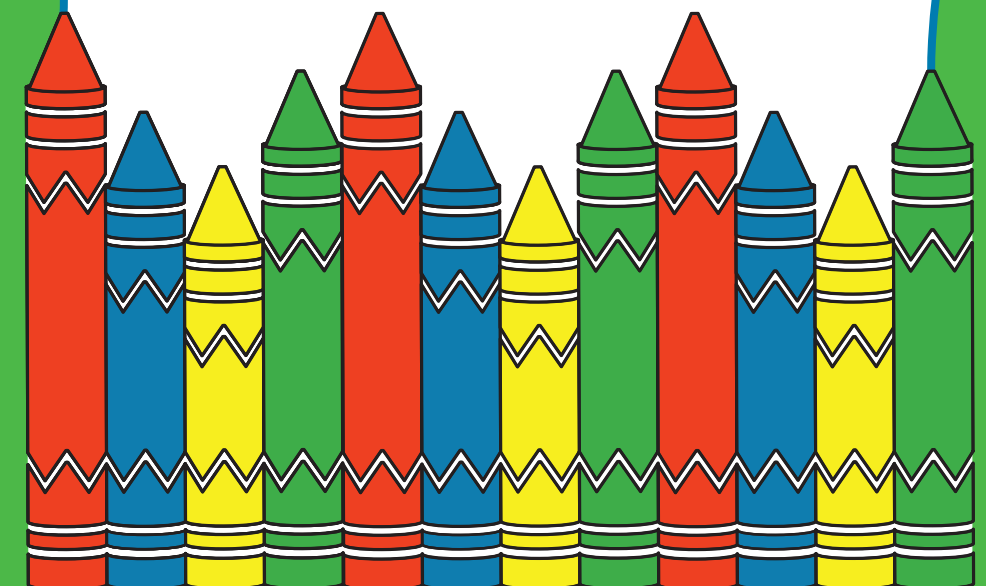
NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-279, Section 153). Under that law, the data provided by respondents may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (Public Law 107-279, Section 183). The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB # 1850-0750.

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study



Kindergarten Class of 2010-11

National Center for Education Statistics
Institute of Education Sciences
U.S. Department of Education





The ECLS program

The ECLS-K:2011 is the third in a series of early childhood longitudinal studies sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics. Like its predecessors, the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K) and the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort of 2001 (ECLS-B), the ECLS-K:2011 will provide comprehensive and reliable data about today's children, their early learning and development, transition into kindergarten, and progress through school. The data collected over the years will allow researchers, policymakers, and educators to study how student, home, classroom, school, and community factors in children's lives relate to cognitive, social, and emotional development and physical health at various points.

Why is the ECLS-K:2011 so important?

Because many factors influence children's school experiences and outcomes, it is important to understand the different environments in which children live and learn. The ECLS-K:2011 will allow researchers and policymakers to answer the following types of questions:

- What do children know and what skills do they possess when they start school?
- How well do children do in their first encounter with formal schooling?
- How healthy are kindergartners? What percentage are considered overweight or underweight? How many have difficulty hearing?
- How do kindergartners behave? Do they pay attention to teachers, cooperate with other children, and display an eagerness to learn?
- How do children's knowledge, skills, and behavior change over time? How do their school experiences change over time?
- How well do children's kindergarten programs prepare them for the opportunities and challenges in later grades?

Comparing kindergartners then and now

The last nationally representative study to track students through elementary school began with a kindergarten class in 1998-99. There have been many changes in children's lives and in their families and schools in the past 12 years.

For example;

- In early 2002 the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was signed into law. NCLB requires schools to test 3rd through 8th graders to show they are making progress.
- School choice options, in particular public charter schools, have become more available to parents.
- More children have experience with computers and the internet. More educational television programs are available and aimed at young children.
- Health issues that can affect children's performance in school, such as child obesity and asthma, have become more prevalent. There also has been increased attention paid to autism spectrum disorders and to learning disabilities, such as attention deficit disorder.
- There has been an increase in access to prekindergarten programs, including state-funded programs.

The new ECLS-K:2011 can compare today's kindergartners and the environments in which they are learning to those of over a decade ago.



Why should I participate?

The ECLS-K:2011 will provide information that can help families, teachers, schools, superintendents, policy makers, and researchers make informed decisions about what is best for today's children. It also can be used to explore how changes in school policy and the learning environment affect children's experience in kindergarten and in later school years. Such information is critical to providing our children with the best opportunity for success.

We found during the ECLS-K that children enjoyed the assessments and showing what they knew. Parents also reported that they were happy to participate:

"I feel strongly that more parents should get involved to help improve the education system in this country. I am very excited and happy to be a part of this landmark study."

- Parent, Boston, MA

"We are happy to make a difference in education and the future of the early childhood program."

- Parent, Mason City, IA

"I think the study was a good idea. I was very happy that (my son) was picked. He said it was fun and that he had a really good time."

- Parent, Cincinnati, OH

The success of the ECLS-K:2011 depends on your help. It is vitally important that those individuals who are selected agree to participate because they represent many others across the nation. Your participation will help to assure that the experiences of all parents and kindergartners are represented in the study.